

Governor's Council On Substance Abuse 1995 Recommendations to Governor Lowry

Safe Communities & Strong Families

Creating Safe Communities and Strong Families by reducing the human and economic costs of the abuse of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs.

Substance Abuse: Our Nation's Number One Health Problem

WHEREAS, alcohol and other drug abuse resulted in economic losses of \$1.81 billion and caused 2,155 deaths in this state in 1990 alone; and

WHEREAS, alcoholism, tobacco use, and other drug addictions, left untreated, will contribute significantly to the costs of health care, violence and crime; and

WHEREAS, strategies to reduce these economic and human costs must include individuals, families, and communities working in partnership with government, private industry, the faith community, the criminal justice system, and schools to create innovative and coordinated solutions to the problem, and strengthen successful programs; and

WHEREAS, the Governor's Council on Substance Abuse was created to make recommendations on strategies for fighting substance abuse,

NOW, THEREFORE, the Governor's Council on Substance Abuse makes the following recommendations to the Governor:

1. Prevention Works, Support Positive Learning

Make substance abuse prevention and treatment a top state priority. Include funding these Governor's Council on Substance Abuse recommendations in the Governor's 1996 supplemental budget, prior to any distribution of surplus funds.

Reduce the risks and harm from alcohol, tobacco and other drug abuse, "from the womb to the tomb".

- a. Provide comprehensive kindergarten through grade 12 health education which includes prevention, intervention, referral and aftercare support;
- b. Support collaborative community-based programs;
- c. Make prevention of alcohol, tobacco and other drug abuse a funding priority;
- d. Let no part of the system off-the-hook. Demand governmental accountability. Support ongoing community responsibility; and
- e. Continue to support community-based collaborative efforts to provide accessible services to children, youth, and families. Continue to empower communities and bring together service providers to coordinate service delivery, and to assess needs for additional services, resources, and information sharing.

2. Bolster Family Support Systems

Help families struggling with alcohol and drug abuse.

- a. Expand community treatment capacity to address child abuse and neglect in families where there is parental alcohol and other drug abuse. Provide immediate access to treatment by doubling the number of treatment slots in the next two years;
- b. Train Child Protective Services and Child Welfare Services workers to screen for alcohol and drug problems and implement community resource referral procedures;
- c. Provide training to parents with alcohol and other drug abuse problems; and
- d. Support and enhance current campaigns to eliminate fetal alcohol syndrome and fetal alcohol effect.

3. Unite with Citizens

Convene community forums throughout the state to culminate in a statewide forum on "Safe Communities & Strong Families." The Governor, the justice system, legislators, educators, and state agencies should provide leadership in convening forums, then step aside and listen. Through the forums we can hear what the citizens have to say. We need to hear from all aspects of the community, including: youth and parents, the faith community, civic and fraternal organizations, business executive and industry leaders, labor leaders, local governments, health care providers, law enforcement, school personnel, and statewide coalitions.

4. Battle the Media Glamorization of Drugs and Alcohol

We ask the Governor to lead an aggressive campaign to de-glamorize alcohol, tobacco and illegal drug use, especially those campaigns which hook kids and ethnic groups. We need community norms which promote healthy behaviors and discourage abusive behaviors.

- a. Convene a statewide multi-media task force that will increase awareness of substance abuse and promote broad community involvement in a statewide call to action. The task force would include media (management and practitioners), the faith community, civic and fraternal organizations, business and industry, labor, local, state and federal governments, health care providers, law enforcement, schools, community members, and youth. The task force would support and incorporate existing media campaigns, ensuring consistent and ongoing messages about substance abuse; and
- b. Fight back by displaying messages about alcohol, tobacco and other substance use and abuse on state-owned vehicles and property.

5. Back Law Enforcement

Provide new tools to confront crime.

- a. Revise legislation to provide for one-party consent;
- b. Revise legislation to allow pen registration;
- c. Support the building of the Statewide Integrated Narcotics System (SINS);

- d. Create, by executive order of the Governor, a statewide "1-800-NO-DRUGS" line to report a suspected dealer;
- e. Revise legislation to ban tobacco sampling; and
- f. Review boating safety laws including implied consent and field testing for sobriety.

We ask the Governor to encourage communities to develop strategies to prevent and reduce alcohol, tobacco and other drug abuse and related crimes, and to involve law enforcement in the strategy, planning, and implementation of the plan.

6. Fund Drug Courts

We must expand collaboration and coordination between criminal justice systems and community alcohol and drug prevention and treatment. We can initiate more cost effective alternatives to address alcohol and drug-related crime.

- a. Stabilize and enhance funding for two existing drug courts in Western Washington;
- b. Implement two additional drug courts in Eastern Washington; and
- c. Expand community treatment options, which might be used as diversion or sentencing options in lieu of institutionalization, for non-violent youth with alcohol or other drug abuse problems.

7. Review Taxation

We ask the Governor to review current rates of taxation of the ethanol content of alcohol with the goal of determining if the current taxation of wine and beer is commensurate with the problems to which they contribute; i.e., addiction and other health problems, and driving under the influence.

8. Strengthen Drug-Free Workplaces

We ask the Governor to encourage drug-free workplaces by sponsoring, in conjunction with Drug Free Washington month (April), a Governor's forum involving legislators, business, labor, state agencies, and non-profit organizations. The forum would address:

- a. Ways to motivate employers and employees to be drug-free and identify incentive factors in the workplace environment;
- b. Identify how workers compensation can be reformed to provide incentives; and
- c. Recommend changes in laws and new legislation.

We ask the Governor to support new bills or draft legislation which would provide motivation and give incentives to employers who commit to a drug-free workplace.